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Church must be always the same, the successors of St. Peter must hold the same rank and power as St. Peter. What kind of a Church would it be without a visible head, to protect or preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? It would be like a kingdom without a king, like a city without a magistrate, in a confused Babylonian state, and trampling the law of God under foot. Eighteen popes died in succession for the faith of Christ; they were not angels, but men; but was there ever such a number of bishops, or chief fathers of the Church, filling any other chair of authority in the world? It is impossible for the art or power of man to cut off the head of the mystical body of Christ. Therefore, I will not answer any other interpretation against the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, that were given up to St. Peter in the presence of the rest of apostles. The kingdom of Heaven means the Church on earth, and the successors of St. Peter will never part with the keys of the Church, until our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ himself will come to receive them to toss them into eternity. I can prove to you, sir, from the holy fathers, and from the infallible authority of the Catholic Church, that all Christians cannot confirm their brethren. It is bishops that are appointed, or have the power, in the Church to administer the sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Orders. The bishops, says the holy fathers, in the administration of the sacrament of Confirmation, give priests to the Church, and the priests, in the administration of the sacrament of Baptism, give children to the Church.

Yours, &c.,

AN OLD READER.

Though sincerely reluctant to exclude from our pages any communication from Roman Catholic correspondents, written in a fair spirit, we must really protest against any of our correspondents filling letters with a mere string of assertions without proof, and wholly overlooking and leaving unanswered the proofs we have from time to time adduced to the contrary.

We have already given in our papers on the supremacy what we believe to be unanswerable reasons for believing that St. Peter was never Bishop of Rome. Will "An Old Reader" grapple with those reasons, and refute them? When he has done so, and not till then, he has a right dogmatically to assert that St. Peter was the first Pope and Bishop of Rome.

We shall in due time give our readers what we believe to be equally good reasons for holding that none of the texts relied on by our correspondent prove the Pope to be Christ's vicar on earth, or to have any divine power over the universal Church.

In the meantime, as our correspondent appears to lay so much stress upon being able to show an uninterrupted succession of 253 Popes from St. Peter to the present day, perhaps he will favour us with a list of them, or tell us where we shall find the list he relies on as the correct one. That he has taken the statement from some not very recent writer at second hand, (we should think, from other parts of the letter, from some Roman Catholic catechism), is apparent from his allusion to Leo XII. as "the present Pope," though he must surely know that Leo XII. is long dead, and that the present Pope is Pius IX.*

In giving us this uninterrupted succession, we recommend to his attention our paper on the *Succession of the Popes*, in our number for September, 1855 (CATHOLIC LAYMAN, vol. iv., p. 162).

With regard to the observations at the close of our correspondent's letter, we have merely to say that we never denied that it was the office of bishops to confer orders and administer the rite of confirmation, or that it is the duty of the priests to administer sacrament of baptism.

WHAT IS A PROTESTANT?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

Sir,—Allow me to make a few observations in your columns in answer to the above question; one not unfrequently asked in the present day, by those who take an interest in the conflict now going on between the Church of Rome and those who differ with her.

1. The term "Protestant" is a nickname; and so, objectionable. It is not recognized by the Church as a definition of her faith. It is not employed in any canon or article, or ecclesiastical record, possessing Church authority.

Nevertheless, it is not a bad term, so far as it goes; and it is necessary to be borne and maintained, so long as the Western Churches of the Roman Obedience remain as they are, who forced it upon us about 300 years ago.

2. "But (say some), if you are a Protestant, you are not a Catholic; and, if you are not a Catholic, you are not a Christian."

Not so, my friend (I answer): on the contrary, my conviction is that I should not be a true member of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, in these "latter times," if I was not a Protestant. (1. Tim. iv. 1; 2. Tim. iii. 1.) St. Paul, even, was compelled to become such, in the same sense that we are; and so, as I said before, I cannot help

it; for so it must be, and on this account. Wherever error exists, especially if taught by individuals or communities professing to belong unto Christ's Church, every true believer, every orthodox community of Christians, must protest against it; and that makes him and them Protestants. Now, error does exist, and is dogmatically held and taught (as I am prepared to show) by that branch of the once orthodox Church established in Rome. Against that community, but solely on that score, we protest; that is, stand forth in defence and affirmation of the true and ancient faith. They have nicknamed us, in consequence, Protestants: of which we have no need to be ashamed, considering why and by whom we are so called. It is our glory, their shame. Necessity is laid upon us to be ever "contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). We do so, as religiously bound. Those who have left that faith, either by adding to or taking from it, are they against whom we "contend" or "protest," and we should not be good Catholics if we did not. Our Protestantism, therefore, is the proof of our orthodoxy; which is what I said just now.

3. But if it were true, that because I am a Protestant I am not a Catholic, then there are no Catholics in the world; for all Catholics must and do protest. Indeed, those very members of the Roman communion who arrogate the name of Catholic to themselves, and deride those who are called Protestants, are themselves the very people who protest the most: much fiercer and more intolerant Protestants than we. In proof of this, let us refer to the Creed, the Catechism, and the last Council, which are the exponents of the present faith of the Church of Rome; and we shall find therein nothing but protestantism from beginning to end. For example: by the canons of the Council of Trent, the creed of Pope Pius IV., and the Catechism of Pius V. the doctrine of "Transubstantiation," or the total change of the elements of bread and wine in the Eucharist into the human body of Christ, is made an article of faith, necessary for salvation to be received; and protesting against those who receive it not, in these words, "let them be accursed." (Vide Council of Trent, Sess. xiii. c. 4: can. 1, 2. Creed of Pius IV. Cat. of Pius V., pp. 208, 214, 219, 225, 243-4.) Again, by the same "authority" of Canons, Creed, and Catechism, the doctrine of "the Sacrifice in the Mass," or the "immolation" (i. e., slaying in sacrifice) of the very human body of Christ, "the same that was born of the Virgin," by the priests, as "a Victim one and the same as that which was offered on the cross" "for the sins of the living and of the dead," is also made an article of belief, "necessary for salvation," "to be taught and received;" protesting against the denial of such a doctrine in the same words: "let him be accursed." (Vide Council of Trent, Sess. xxii. ch. 1, 2, can. 3: also, Creed of Pius IV. and Cat. Pius V., pp. 246-7.) If, then, the mere fact of protesting causes a community to forfeit the name of Catholic, the Roman Church must certainly lay aside its claim to be so called. If we are not Catholics because we protest against what we hold to be error, neither are they. We are both alike so far as this is concerned: the only difference between us being, that we simply protest, as taught in the Word of God, against innovations and invasions of the primitive faith of the Church of Christ, which "altereth not," but curse not in so doing; while the Roman Church protest against us for so doing, cursing us, contrary to the word of God, at the same time.

4. And now I have briefly answered the question, "What is a Protestant?" especially as applicable to me as a member of the Reformed Catholic Church. A Protestant is one who ("Protestans"), standing forth in defence of the truth against doctrines and practices which can be proved to be contrary to the Word of God and the teaching of the primitive Church, is, what St. Jude commended him to be, a defender of the faith—a conservative Catholic.

But here, in conclusion, I must caution my readers from entertaining, and protect myself against being supposed to hold, an opinion which would be very false in itself, and fatal, indeed, to us all—viz., that because every true Christian must be, "in these latter and evil days," a Protestant, therefore every Protestant is a true Christian. It is one thing to protest against error, and another thing to stand forth (protest) for the truth. A true Christian churchman will do both; but you may do the former without being such. Of course, you must possess "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints" before

1. The doctrine of "Transubstantiation," as taught "superiorum juris."

"In the Eucharist that which before consecration was bread and wine is, after consecration, really and substantially the body and blood of our Lord—the same that was born of the Virgin; and, however remote from and alien to our senses it may be, no substance of the elements remain in the Sacrament; and the substance of bread and wine is so changed into the body and blood of our Lord that the substance of bread and wine altogether ceases to exist. After consecration the substance of bread and wine does not remain in the Sacrament; and, therefore, the worship of the *Latria* which is due to God, is to be offered to this most Holy Sacrament."—Vid. ref. ut supra.

2. The doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass is thus propounded:—"We therefore confess that the sacrifice of the mass ought to be considered one and the same—Christ our Lord. And this being the case, the pastor will teach with absolute certainty, that if with pure hearts and lively faith we immolate and offer this most Holy Victim, we shall, without doubt, obtain mercy; and, inasmuch as in this sacrifice the same Christ, immolated (i. e., slain, and offered in sacrifice) who offered himself once on the cross, the Victim is one and the same."—Vid. ref. ut supra.

you can truly be said to "contend for it." A Socinian who denies the divinity of our Blessed Lord, and a Dissenter who thinks religion to be a matter of free trade and free thinking, will one and each protest against the corruptions of modern Rome; but such protestantism will neither constitute the one a Christian nor the other a churchman. Truth, apostolic and catholic, in doctrine and discipline, must first be held, before it is possible to protest, as we do, against error.

I, am Sir, yours truly,

A REFORMED CATHOLIC.

IS IT WELL TO HEAR BOTH SIDES?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

YOUR HONOUR,—That's the quare story about the dumb village, and quarest of all, if the women held their tongues too. That bangs Banagher itself. Sure it be to be a "blessed priest" did that. But what the priest said to the people set me on remembering, and I'll tell your honour how. The story allows that the priest said the people was to hear what the Catholic Church says; and sure that means what the priest says himself; and that they weren't to listen to what the other side would say at all. Now, your honour, I lived in the North once, down in Tyrone, near Benburb; and there was a townland near hand called Mullamoshog, and there was two tenants living in it; and the name of the one was Johnny Raw, and the name of the other was Paddy Murphy; and if your honour or any of them that lives about Benburb will go to that same townland, they will hear that it's no lie about Paddy Murphy and Johnny Raw, that held the two farms, with a bad fence betwixt them; though, whether the same man is in it now after the famine, is more nor I can tell, for it is a good bit since I left it.

Now, your honour, there was a dispute between them two men about a byre that Johnny Raw built; and Paddy Murphy allowed that the back wall of the byre came in on his land, beyond where the fence ought to be; and your honour sees it wasn't easy to know rightly, where the fence was bad; and sore battles there was about the same.

Well, the agent used to come to Benburb for the rent, and I had a bit of business with him one day, when in comes Paddy Murphy to speak about the wall of the byre; and I'll just tell your honour what Paddy Murphy said; says he, "I'll tell your honour all about the wall of the byre, and then your honour will just do me justice; and don't be listening to that other man's story at all, at all, for he'll only confuse you."

Now, your honour, the agent was a fair man, and he didn't think that was the right way, but I didn't stay long enough to hear how it was settled about the wall of the byre; and, deed, I never thought more of it, for sure what Paddy Murphy said was no more nor any man would say who wasn't right sure himself where the mearing ought to be. So I never thought no more of it till I read the story of the dumb village, and what the priest said about not listening to the other story at all, at all; and then it just came to my mind about Paddy Murphy and Johnny Raw; and, says I to myself, sure there is a deal of Johnny Raw's in the world that is done by the Paddy Murphys. So I hope your honour, or some of them that reads the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, will inquire about it in Benburb, and see that it's no lie I am telling.

Your honour's servant to command,

PAT MURRAY, of Westmeath.

[We think Pat Murray's illustration is a good one; where a mearing fence is in dispute, a fair man will hear both sides before deciding. Our readers will see it noticed, in another article in this paper, that the Church of Rome has never been able to say where the mearing lies between what is idolatry and what is not idolatry; and, therefore, in that case especially, it is necessary to hear both sides before deciding.]

FARMING OPERATIONS FOR OCTOBER.

The *Dun or Winter Oats* should be sown by the middle of the month. The land and weather should be dry for getting in this crop.

Parsnips, sown this month on dry, well-tilled, and well-manured land, will come in early, and yield a heavy crop.

Potatoes may now be lifted and stored in narrow pits, on dry land, taking care to do so in dry weather.

Meadow and Grass Land should henceforth, after being closely eaten down, be liberally top-dressed with rich composts, and the cattle droppings be well broken and scattered about.

Odds and Ends.—Chip and slash hedges, which should be finished without delay. It will be a good time to make and plant fences. Cleanse dykes and water-courses of all obstructions before the winter floods set in. Attend to draining and subsoiling; plough up stubble and other lands that are to lie fallow during the winter. Put out manure and plough it in for the spring sowings of beans, peas, carrots, and parsnips; thatch the corn and hay-ricks securely; keep the flail or thrashing-machine going for the supply of corn to market, and fresh straw to the stock; fetch home and store fuel, and repair roads, fences, and gates.—*Farmers' Gazette*.

* Since the foregoing was in type, we have received a second letter from our correspondent, reiterating the same arguments, but speaking of the number as 255, including Pope Pius IX.